

12th World Congress of the International Photodynamic Association (IPA)

Seattle, USA, 11-15 June 2009

Meeting Report

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Around 300 participants from more than 20 different countries travelled to Seattle in June to attend the 12th IPA World Congress. This was organised locally by SPIE on behalf of the Congress President, *Professor David Kessel (USA)* and his Organising Committee, which consisted of *Professors Tayyaba Hasan, Chuck Gomer and Kenneth Wang (USA)*. This Congress followed in the great tradition of these biennial conferences which routinely attract leading clinical and scientific researchers in the fields of photodynamic therapy (PDT) and photodiagnosis (PD) alike.

Seattle is located in the North West of the USA, in Washington State and has its shore line on the Puget Sound. It is connected to numerous small islands on this edge of the Pacific Ocean by frequent passenger and vehicle carrying ferries. The city is famous for its Seafood and the Pike Place Market and the landmark building on its skyline is the distinctive 605 foot tall Space Needle, which was built for the 1962 Seattle World's Fair.

The IPA is an academic society whose membership consists of the most prominent international clinicians and scientists involved in performing and researching PDT and PD. It aims to promote the study of diagnosis and treatment using light and photosensitisers, to disseminate such information to the members of the IPA, the medical community and to the general public. The biennial World Congress therefore plays an important role in the activity of the society and attendance is an excellent way to keep abreast of new developments in this rapidly evolving field.

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The meeting was officially opened by *Professor David Kessel (USA)* who also received a presentation in thanks for his efforts in organising this 12th World Congress from IPA Secretary General, *Professor Patrick Barron (Japan)*. This gift

took the form of an original piece of artwork produced by a local artist who was also in attendance at the presentation (Figure 1).

Two plenaries then commenced the scientific portion of the day. The first was delivered by *Professor Ravi Pandy (USA)* on behalf of *Professor Tom Dougherty (USA)* and considered the role of the academic in the development of new photosensitising drug formulations. This was followed by *Professor Julia Levy (USA)* who drew on her own career to consider how PDT could be commercialised and thus brought to market as an effective therapy.

Concurrent, parallel sessions then commenced for the rest of the day with single sessions being delivered on “PDT Mechanisms of Phototoxicity” and “PDT: Some of the Variables”, two sessions each on “PDT and Immune Responses” and “Clinical PDT” and a series of three workshops sponsored by Photocure on “PDT and PD with Porphyrin Precursors”.

The first set of poster presentations were also made available for viewing and consisted of 50 separate contributions covering a wide range of PDT related topics.

At the close of the day a Welcome Reception was held in the Emerald Ballroom of the Red Lion Hotel (which was the venue for this Congress) for all participants and their guests.

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The second day started with another two very informative plenary sessions. *Professor Tayyaba Hasan (USA)* spoke about how molecular targeting could be used to enhance PDT treatment outcomes and then *Professor Steve Bown (UK)* talked about how PDT could be taken into mainstream clinical practice and the current barriers that are currently inhibiting this translation occurring on a larger scale.

The parallel sessions comprised of another three sessions on “Clinical PDT”, the final part of the Photocure sponsored “PDT and PD with Porphyrin Precursors” workshop, two sessions on “Preclinical PDT” as well as single sessions on “PDT Photophysics”, “PDT Mechanisms” and “PDT Techniques”.

The IPA Board Meeting was held at lunchtime. At this meeting of the IPA Directors, *Professor Patrick Barron (Japan)* stepped down as IPA Secretary General and *Dr Alison Curnow (UK)* was appointed as his successor. *Professor Eric Edell (USA)* also stepped down as IPA Treasurer and *Professor Tayyaba Hasan (USA)* will now perform this important role on behalf of the society. The majority of the meeting was spent considering the three very good proposals the Board had received to host the 14th IPA World Congress in 2013. After lengthy discussion and deliberation as well as a paper ballot, Seoul, The Republic of Korea was announced as the winner, with *Professor Ahn Woong-Shick (Korea)* as Congress President. The remainder of the discussions considered the plans *Professor Herwig Kostron (Austria)* was making as the next Congress President, as the 13th IPA World Congress will be held in Innsbruck, Austria (10th – 14th May 2011) (Figure 2).

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The final two invited plenaries took place on Saturday morning. *Professor Stan Brown (UK)* talked about the clinical developments taking place in antimicrobial PDT and *Professor Herwig Kostron (Austria)* gave an overview of the use of PDT in neurosurgery.

Parallel sessions consisted of the final three sessions in the “Clinical PDT” series, two sessions on “Sensitiser Synthesis” and a single session on “PDT Photophysics and Nanotech”.

Another 45 diverse poster presentations also commenced as part of the second poster session and these contributions as well as those in the first session were considered by a scientific panel for the poster prizes. This panel decided to award four prizes to the following poster presentations:

Development of a wide field reflectance and fluorescence imaging device for the detection of skin and oral cavity cancer.
S. Pratavieira, V. S. Bagnato and C. Kurachi.
University of San Paulo, Brazil.

Molecular mechanisms associated with metronomic ALA-PDT in the brain.
G. Singh.
Juravinski Cancer Centre, Canada.

Efficacy and safety of PDT with Photolon (Fotolon): a seven-year clinical experience.
T. V. Trukhachova, S. V. Shliakhtsin, P. T. Petrov, Y. P. Isotomin, V. N. Chalau, D. A. Cerkovsky, L. N. Marchanko, A. S. Fedulov and M. A. Kaplan.
RUE Belmedpreparaty, Belarus, Research Institute of Oncology and Medical Radiology, Belarus and Medical Radiology Research Centre, Russian Federation.

Exploiting bacterial drug resistance: a single construct for the diagnosis and treatment of drug resistant infections.
U. W. Sallum, X. Zheng, S. Verma and T. Hasan.
Wellman Centre for Photomedicine, USA.

These prizes were presented by *Professor Kristian Berg (Norway)* at the IPA Gala Dinner which was held in the evening at one of the elevated restaurants of the Seattle Space Needle. Thanks were also given to *Professor Patrick Barron (Japan)* at this event by *Professor Steve Bown (UK)* and the new IPA Secretary General, Dr *Alison Curnow (UK)* for his 23 years of committed service as IPA Secretary General. We believe all attendees enjoyed this event and the 360° views of Seattle at sunset were spectacular.

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Concurrent sessions on Sunday, comprised of a series of four sessions on “Antimicrobial PDT” and single sessions on “PDT Dosimetry”, “PDT Evaluation Techniques”, “PDT New Approaches” and “PDT Targeting”.

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The final day of the Congress closed at lunchtime following the final double parallel sessions on “PDT Biophysics” and “Preclinical PDT Methodology”.

All in all over 150 individual oral presentations were made in the 36 parallel sessions held throughout this IPA World Congress and these were hosted by a number of Chairs, to whom the society give thanks to for ensuring that all sessions ran in a timely manner. The meeting was scientifically rigorous as well as clinically relevant and participants consisted of a good mix of both scientists and clinicians. The programme was packed full of high quality content, delivered by both eminent and up-and-coming researchers. Discussions were interesting and thought provoking demonstrating that this is an area of medical research where there is still much to learn and to apply to further improve patient care.

There is a SPIE publication of short manuscripts provided by the participants of the Congress available for purchase for anyone who would like to know more details of the content of this meeting.

We greatly look forward to the 13th IPA World Congress being held in Innsbruck, Austria on 10th – 14th May 2011. Further details about this meeting, the IPA and how to become an IPA member can be found on the IPA website;
<http://www.pms.ac.uk/ipa/>.



12th IPA World Congress President, Professor David Kessel, with the original artwork presentation from the Opening Ceremony.



Professor Tayyaba Hasan (IPA Treasurer), Dr Alison Curnow (IPA Secretary General) and Professor Herwig Kostron (13th IPA World Congress President) at the IPA Gala Dinner held at the Seattle Space Needle.